

Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup

For The Week Ending March 31, 2002

This is the first report in the 2002 series of the Pennsylvania *Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup*. This and other NASS reports can be found on the Internet at www.usda.gov/nass.

Poor week for Field Work: There were 2.1 days suitable for field work. Soil moisture was rated 6 percent very short, 22 percent short, 49 percent adequate and 23 percent surplus. Principle farm activities included spring plowing; planting oats; fixing fences; machinery maintenance; ordering supplies; storing equipment; cleaning barns; spreading lime and fertilizers; hauling and spreading manure; caring for livestock; spraying herbicides; pruning fruit trees; and completing income taxes.

Crops: Some areas around the commonwealth received generous amounts of rain but not enough to cover the drought conditions from last year. Spring plowing was 26 percent complete, 19 percent ahead of the previous year and 18 percent ahead of the 5-year average. Ten percent of the oat acreage has been planted, 6 percent more than the 5-year average. Corn and soybean planting have not started at this time. Wheat, barley and rye were starting to green up.

Livestock: Even though pasture conditions have progressed, farmers have continued to feed hay to their livestock. Thirty-eight percent of the pasture land was rated poor to very poor; 40 percent fair; and 22 percent good to excellent.

PA Crop Progress for Week Ending March 31, 2002

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
Percent			
Spring Plowing	26	7	8
Oats, Planted	10	1	4

U.S. As Of March 24, 2002: Temperatures averaged below normal across most of the Nation during the week, and far below normal in parts of the northern Great Plains. Meanwhile, above-normal temperatures were confined to the Gulf Coast, adjacent areas of the interior Southeast, and the interior Southwest. The warm weather stimulated winter wheat development, but jointing lagged behind normal in the Southeast. Heavy rain soaked soils and halted fieldwork in parts of the southern Great Plains and interior Mississippi Delta, as well as the Tennessee and lower Ohio River Valleys. Soil moisture supplies were excessive in most areas receiving the heavy rainfall. Most of the Southeast received light precipitation that provided adequate moisture for short-term winter grain and forage growth. However, long-term moisture reserves remained low on the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The central and northern Great Plains also remained unfavorably dry. Storms continued to deliver precipitation in the Pacific Northwest.

PA Crop Condition for Week Ending March 31, 2002

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Percent					
Winter Wheat	0	0	28	48	24
Oats	2	2	64	32	0
Alfalfa Stand	2	4	46	43	5
Timothy Clover Stand	14	4	53	26	3
Pasture Conditions	9	29	40	21	1

Weather Data For Week Ending March 31, 2002

STATION	LAST WEEK WEATHER SUMMARY DATA April 1, 01 -						PRECIPITATION					GDD BASE 50F		BASE 40F
	TEMPERATURE			PRECIPITATION			PRECIPITATION							
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	TOT
<u>NORTHWEST</u>														
Erie	67	23	36	-5	1.21	5								
Franklin_AG	69	20	38	-3	1.76	4								
Meadville	64	23	36	-3	1.04	4								
Mercer	67	14	36	-5	1.82	5								
Springboro	66	20	35	-5	1.60	4								
Warren	67	21	37	-3	1.86	4								
<u>NORTH CENTRAL</u>														
Bradford	60	13	33	-3	1.80	4								
Emporium	67	22	38	+2	1.87	4								
Kane	60	10	31	-5	1.82	4								
Laporte	59	21	37	-4	1.94	4								
Lock_Haven	67	24	41	-1	2.41	3								
Port_Allegany	63	17	35	-2	1.51	4								
Renovo	66	24	40	-2	1.69	4								
Ridgway	65	16	35	-3	1.26	4								
Stevenson_Dam	67	22	38	+1	1.74	4								
Towanda	66	23	39	-2	2.24	3								
Wellsboro	63	19	35	-1	1.83	4								
Williamsport_AP	64	27	43	+1	2.01	2								
<u>NORTHEAST</u>														
Hawley	62	26	40	+2	1.35	3								
Scranton	63	29	44	+3	1.32	2								
Susquehanna	64	25	40	+5	2.07	2								
<u>WEST CENTRAL</u>														
Butler	70	20	39	-4	1.51	4								
New_Castle	70	20	40	+0	1.50	4								
Slippery_Rock	69	20	39	-1	1.64	4								
<u>CENTRAL</u>														
Altoona_AP	64	23	41	-2	0.37	2								
Du_Bois	64	19	37	-3	1.82	3								
Lewistown	66	26	43	-2	0.98	3								
Middletown	64	31	47	+2	1.25	1								
Prince_Gallitzi	68	18	39	-2	1.51	4								
Selinsgrove	64	24	42	+0	1.09	3								
State_College_P	66	27	41	+0	1.72	3								
<u>EAST CENTRAL</u>														
Allentown	66	30	46	+3	0.59	2								
Lehighton	67	27	43	-1	0.99	1								
Matamoras	64	26	41	-1	1.10	4								
Tobyhanna	66	20	38	+3	1.32	2								
<u>SOUTHWEST</u>														
Allegheny_Co_AP	72	28	44	+2	1.71	4								
Derry	70	22	41	+0	1.66	3								
Meyersdale	68	19	40	-3	0.56	2								
Mount_Pleasant	73	22	42	+3	1.73	4								
Pittsburgh	72	24	43	-2	1.64	4								
Rector	73	20	42	+3	1.82	5								
Waynesburg	74	24	43	-1	0.10	4								
<u>SOUTH CENTRAL</u>														
Biglerville	66	31	46	+1	1.27	2								
Everett	67	23	43	+2	0.77	2								
Hanover	66	26	45	+1	0.90	4								
Shippensburg	67	28	46	+2	0.90	1								
South_Mountain	69	20	42	-2	0.91	3								
York_AP	67	24	46	-1	0.84	1								
<u>SOUTHEAST</u>														
Green_Lane	68	31	48	+5	0.60	2								
Hamburg	67	28	45	+4	0.82	1								
Hopewell	65	30	46	-1	0.70	2								
Lancaster_AP	65	28	46	+2	0.63	1								
Neshaminy_Falls	71	27	46	+3	0.98	3								
New_Holland	66	28	45	+2	0.64	2								
Philadelphia	70	34	49	+4	0.71	3								
Philadelphia_NE	70	31	48	+3	0.84	3								
Reading_AP	65	30	46	+4	0.71	1								
Valley_Forge_Na	72	27	47	+2	0.83	2								
Willow_Grove	84	40	52	+8	0.67	4								

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).
Precipitation (Rainfall or melted snow/ice) and Pan Evap in inches.
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of .01 inch or more.
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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INTERNET REPORTERS' COMMENTS, BY COUNTY:

Reporters are from Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.

“Rain and snow this week did not make up for a good start to Spring. Most farmers are making plans to ‘hit the fields running’ as soon as the weather breaks.”

---Ron McCorkle, Crawford County

“There is still snow on the ground and all fields are very saturated for manure spreading. Maple syrup producers are still collecting sap.”

---Lewis L. Steckler, Erie County

“Overall, it has been an open winter. We have been getting some snow during the last two weeks. It rained early this week. Generally, we are in good shape although more rain will be welcome. There has been some concern about the alfalfa crop. It is too early to tell much at this time.”

---Sherri Butters, Tioga County

“One to two inches of rain fell this week. This helped with the prolonged drought but the county is still far below normal moisture level. Some manure hauling is being done. Fence repairs, building and fence row clearing are also being completed. Due to the open winter a fair amount of tillage was completed in February. The weather has not been favorable for the full speed of the ground preparation and planting work.”

---Harold Wareham, NRCS, Blair County

“It's too early to comment on the conditions of alfalfa, timothy, and pasture stands. Everything is still dormant. The beginning of week was wet and cold while the end of the week was sunny and pleasant. The winter wheat that was planted early, looks better than the fields that were planted at the end of the planting season.”

---Dolly Little or Joe Shevchik, Cambria County

“We had 5 inches of rain the last two weeks. We started spring plowing but now it is too wet. Hay crops are not growing yet. Nothing has been planted yet in this area.”

---Butch, Huntingdon County

“It has been a wet week after a very dry period. Pastures are just starting to show green. Most producers are ready for oats and alfalfa planting as soon as soil conditions dry.”

---John Lohr, Westmoreland County

“The surface moisture has allowed the fall planted grain to green-up and add growth. The water table is still seriously below normal, stemming from drought since 1999. Precipitation occurring during the next 6 weeks will be crucial to hay yields and the number of planted corn acres.”

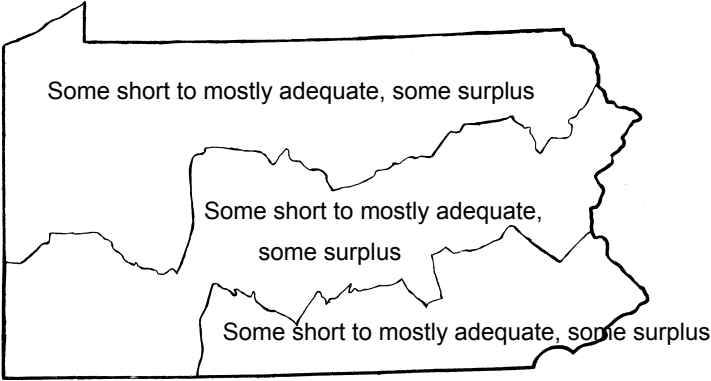
---John K. Johnston, Fulton County

“Major activities this week were plowing, spreading fertilizer, lime, and manure. Some alfalfa was seeded.”

---Ronald J. Althoff, Lancaster County



SOIL MOISTURE



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